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SELECTIONS FROM THE RECORDS OF THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT.

No. II.—New Series.

REPORT

ON THE

SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF THE SURAT COLLECTORATE.

BY

A. F. BELLASIS, Esq.,

FIRST ASSISTANT COLLECTOR.

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Bombay:

PRINTED FOR GOVERNMENT

AT THE

BOMBAY EDUCATION SOCIETY'S PRESS.

1854.

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REPORT ON THE SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF THE SURAT COLLECTORATE.

No. 42 of 1850.

Territorial Department,

Revenue.

From Augustus Fortunatus Bellasis, Esquire,

First Assistant Collector of Surat,

To Edward Gordon Fawcett, Esquire,

Collector of Surat.

Dated the 15th October 1850.

Sir,

In reply to your endorsement No. 244, of the 26th July 1849, I beg to submit a General Report on the condition of the districts under my control.

2. As the six southern purgunnas of this zillah, placed under my permanent charge, contain almost entirely an agricultural population, my remarks will be chiefly confined to a description of the different classes of cultivators, to their general prosperity, and to its causes. I shall then briefly dwell upon the character of the soil, upon the mode of its culture, upon the facilities for irrigation, upon the implements of agriculture used, and upon the different kinds of produce raised ; and I shall conclude with a short account of the principal towns in and adjacent to the southern districts, with some returns of the population, and with a few general remarks.

1. Soopa.*
2. Parchole.
3. Chicklee.
4. Bulsar.
5. Parnera.
6. Bhugwarra.

3. The different cultivators may be classed according to their different castes :—

4. The Battellahs are a peculiar sect of Hindoos, being a caste nearly allied to the Brahmins. Their localities are confined to the Surat and Broach Collectorates. They are very numerous in the districts under my charge, and I would rank them among the best of

1. The Battellah.

* This purgunna has lately been transferred to the Second Assistant Collector's charge, as the extent of the First Assistant Collector's charge was very large.

cultivators. They in general possess the largest holdings of land. They are active and industrious, and, with the assistance of their Halees, or hereditary servants, are enabled to bestow much labour and care on cultivation. Thus they till the soil well. They have all the intelligence of the Brahmin, with a great deal more of energy, and are fully alive to the promotion of their own interests and advantages. They cultivate the major portion of the superior crops, and to their exertion and labour the great increase in the growth of sugar-cane during the last ten years is to be ascribed. The result of their industry and activity is, that they enjoy a degree of comfort and wealth unknown to the cultivator of the Deccan. The Battellah always lives in a well-built brick house; he is always well clothed, has the best cattle in his village, and the command of a little money. He is looked upon as a person of influence and substance by others. His own person, his house, and his lands, have an air of neatness that mark his superior position amongst the society of his village.

5. The Battellahs have managed to obtain, under former Governments, a lion's share of the emoluments and salaries attached to the district and village offices, under the various denominations of Desaees, Shaikdars, Huckdars, Patels, &c., and these they still retain. They also hold among them a considerable portion of the alienated rent-free lands, and have, through their influence, put themselves in possession of the best and most fertile spots in each village.

6. They are notoriously a quarrelsome and intriguing race, full of duplicity and chicanery, adepts in controversy, most obstinate in purpose, and extremely fond of litigation. They will dispute an usurped right, or the doubtful possession of a field or a tree, with a pertinacity unequalled even among the Natives of India. Neither reason nor argument can ever convince them, and after petitioning every tribunal of appeal, I believe death alone puts an end to many of their inveterate disputes about lands. The Battellahs are also styled Anávalus and Mástáns. Most of the members of this caste read and write.

2. The Borah.

7. Strikingly in contrast with the Battellah is the Borah, a sect of Mussulmans very numerous in Guzerat, who pay unbounded homage to their high priest, the Moolna of Surat. Their mild and placid manners, their grave and taciturn disposition, and their contentment even under injury, are remarkably in contrast with the characteristics of the Battellah. As a cultivator, the Borah is equal to the Battellah in industry, but inferior to him in activity and energy. He is content to grow his crops of rice and joaree, sometimes cotton, and a few beegas of sugar-cane, but he is not so ready to build wells, to improve the culture of his land, or to introduce superior crops. The Borah is generally well clothed, and lives confortably; but not with that degree of ease which marks the habitation of the Battellah. The Borahs are most numerous as cultivators in the Soopa and Chicklee purgunnas.

8. The Coonbee is a very numerous class of cultivator. By religion and most ancient custom, the duty of cultivating the soil originally belonged solely to the Coonbee, as the etymology of the word Coonbee or Kānbee implies—*kān*, a root, and *bee*, seed. In regard to the Coonbees, who are widely dispersed throughout the six southern districts of this zillah, I consider them wanting in energy, and inferior both to the Battellah and Borah in industry. They still continue to cultivate largely, and for cultivators they have a fair share of the comforts, with all the necessaries of life, and are generally well clothed. In Soopa, in particular, they are well off, and in many instances they vie with the Battellahs of their village in the extent of their lands, in their well-built houses, and the number of their cattle. The crops they grow are chiefly rice, joaree, cotton, and sugar-cane, the latter crop often to a considerable extent. Many of the Coonbees read and write fairly.

3. The Coonbee.

9. The next class of cultivator is the Coolee and the Máchi. These cannot be placed in comparison with the Battellah, the Borah, or the Coonbee, either in their mode of culture, or in their habits of life. They rarely cultivate any crops but rice, naglee, and joaree. They wear very scanty clothing, and live in rudely made huts, caring for few of the comforts of life, if strong drink, tobacco, and opium be excepted. They are a simple and hardy race, but very much addicted to intoxication, and very short lived. They are most numerous along the sea coast, where they employ themselves very profitably as fishermen and boatmen during the fair season, while their women are chiefly employed in cultivation. The Coolee is also found inland, where he is often to be met with as the under-tenant of the Battellah and of the Coonbee.

4. The Coolee and Máchi.

10. The last class of cultivator I have to notice is the Kalapurruj, which includes the Durio, Naiko, Chowdrie, and other inferior castes. These people differ little from the Bheels in other parts of India, and have migrated from the Dang forest, and other jungly and mountainous districts stretching along the foot of the ghauts. They are an active race, of small stature, of very clean make, and of dark colour, with small piercing eyes. They rudely till the soil, but are very migratory and unsettled cultivators. They cannot bear restraint, but delight to roam with freedom in the wilds of the forest, and seldom wander far from its borders. They are expert in the use of the bow, keen and daring in the pursuit of game, but cautiously avoid the busy haunts of men.

5. The Kalapurruj, or the black race, —*kala* black, and *purruj(praja)* subject.

11. Though admitted by Hindoos within the pale of Hindooism, they appear themselves to have no religion, no priests, no temples: they sometimes reverence a tree, sometimes a stone placed by nature in a curious position. Many of them, especially their women, profess sorcery, and are much dreaded for their witchcraft by other classes of society. Among their own castes, the belief in witchcraft has such a powerful influence over their

minds, that often the death of a child, a cow, or even of a few fowls, is sufficient to induce a whole family to forsake their fields and their crops, and to make them return to the wilds of their native forest.

12. A singular feature in the character of this wild but simple people is, that they almost invariably tell the truth. The motive for falsehood and deceit is not strong with them. If apprehended for robbery or crime, they immediately make an open confession of their guilt, and deliver up the property they have stolen. The nearer you go to their native haunts, the more marked is this striking feature.

13. As a cultivator, the poverty, and consequent misery of this class, are deplorable. His mind, darkened with the deepest ignorance and superstition, makes him improvident, and almost reckless of his own misery. He is a prey to merciless Banians and Marwarees, who fatten on his ruin, and eat the hard-earned profits of his labour. The very seed he sows is often not his own, but borrowed at an interest so exorbitant that the lender claims the produce, when it is reaped, leaving to the wretched cultivator a bare subsistence of the coarsest grain. He cannot read nor write. He often does not know the rental of his land, and cannot tell you the amount of his yearly increasing debt.

14. Much interest was evinced for these wild tribes by Mr. Williamson, the late Revenue Commissioner, and by Mr. J. Vibart, the late Principal Collector of Surat. The late Mamlutdar of Bhugwarra, Ouchuaram Jeewunram, as well as Dajeebhaee Soondurlall, the present incumbent, have both exerted themselves very creditably among these people, by constantly talking to them, and advising them. These officers pointed out to me several individual cases, in which they believed they had done good, by dispelling some of their superstitious ideas, and by instilling into them the benefits of forethought. They had certainly succeeded in making several of them settle in some of the larger villages, build better habitations, and grow small crops of sugar-cane. Several of the Kalapurruj, who have exhibited an inclination to become industrious and permanent cultivators, have been selected to fill the office of Patel, and thus to take an interest and active part in the management of their village. I have always made such selections as much as circumstances would allow. The comparatively easy condition of a few must in time exercise a very beneficial example among the other members of their community.

15. Among the miscellaneous class of cultivators may be named a few Parsees, a few Rajpoots, and a few Mussulmans.

16. Thus it will be seen, if the Kalapurruj people be excepted, that I consider the remaining mass of cultivators are in prosperous and easy circumstances, and well off for agriculturists. This prosperous state of things I attribute to the following causes:—

The mass of Cultivators well off.

17. 1*st*.—The six southern districts of the zillah are among the earliest of the territorial acquisitions of the Honorable East India Company in the Western Presidency of India. Five of these purgunnas were annexed to the Bombay Presidency in A. D. 1802, and the sixth, Bhugwarra, in A. D. 1817. Thus these purgunnas having been nearly half a century under British rule, the inhabitants have become accustomed to our mode of government, and have grown confident in the mildness and justness of its administration.

Reasons for the same :—

1*st*.—They have been long under British Rule.

18. 2*nd*.—Another cause of prosperity is that these purgunnas are contiguous to the sea, and some of them lie along the coast, and are intersected by numerous creeks and navigable rivers. These circumstances, while they afford the cultivator ready means of exporting the produce of the soil, at the same time give employment to a considerable portion of the Coolee population, who carry on a flourishing and lucrative trade as boatmen.

2*nd*.—The Purgunnas are near the Sea.

19. It is from the villages of Bulsar and Parchole that most of the country craft are supplied, which are engaged in conveying the cotton and other merchandize to and from Bombay and this part of Guzerat. A kalassee or ordinary boatman usually receives from Rs. 4 to 5 per month, and a tindal or head boatman from Rs. 10 to 15. The tindals are often themselves the owners of several boats, varying from 50 to 300 khandees. They are employed in the coasting trade from September to May, when, in consequence of the boisterous monsoon putting a stop to all communication along the coast, the Coolees bring their boats into sheltered creeks, and they themselves commence cultivating their fields of rice and joaree. Another advantage the Coolees derive from the sea is, that it supplies them with an abundance of fish, their principal article of food ; and as Government have abolished all taxes on fisheries, they obtain that article cheap.

20. 3*rd*.—Due east of the purgunnas of Chicklee and Bhugwarra, and lying between them and the foot of the ghauts, is an extensive forest, known by the name of the Dang jungle. This forest is well stocked with teak and other valuable timber trees. Large quantities of timber are felled, and brought to the coast every year, both on account of Government, and for merchants and other private individuals. The carriage for this timber affords occupation and profit to another large section of the population, mostly to Coonbees, Borahs, and Battellahs. It is in the hot season, during the months of February, March, April, and May, that this traffic is chiefly carried on, the forest being so dense that it is impenetrable earlier, besides being dangerously unhealthy. During the hot season the cultivator has little use for his cattle, and this traffic affords him a profitable opportunity of employing them. As soon as his crops are cut and housed, he starts off into the jungle, and brings back loads of timber, rafters, and bamboos,

3*rd*.—The Timber Trade.

generally making three trips during the season. Timber being so readily obtainable, induces the cultivator in these districts to build stronger and more substantial houses than he otherwise would. The result is seen in many of the larger villages inhabited by Battellahs, Coonbees, and Borahs, where the houses are mostly of a solid construction, and not of wattle and mud, as elsewhere.

21. *4th.*—The number of ready and convenient markets situated within and adjacent to these purgunnas adds much to the prosperity of the agricultural population. Nowsaree, Gundevee, Beeleemora, Chicklee, Bulsar, Balda, Pardi, Damaun, and Surat, are all places at which the agricultural produce of these purgunnas is largely consumed, and such surplus produce as is not consumed at these market towns is readily bought up for exportation, the facility of the water carriage to other ports being great.

4th.—The number of Market Towns.

22. Besides these market towns, much business is carried on at the Atwaras, or weekly fairs, held in different villages of the Bhugwarra and Parnera purgunnas. Banians from Bulsar, Gundevee, Chicklee, Balda, Pardi, and Damaun, regularly frequent these fairs, with a variety of piece goods, cloths, cutlery, cooking utensils, beads, bangles, Native ornaments, pepper, ginger, tobacco, and such like articles of general consumption and luxury. The neighbouring villagers attend, bringing with them garden produce, wood, salt, and grain. The mode of transacting business is generally by barter, and little money is used. The following are the villages at which fairs are held :—

Number.	Village.	On what Days.
	Bhugwarra Purgunna.	
1	Bhugwarra Kusba	Every Tuesday.
2	Kopurlee	Every Wednesday.
3	Luckmapoor	Every Saturday.
4	Pardi Kusba	Every Wednesday.
5	Chibudkuch	Every Sunday.
6	Koonta	Annually, from Posh Vud 10th to Falgoon Shood 4th, being 39 days.
7	Luvacha	Annually, from Falgoon Shood 5th to 15th, being 10 days.
8	Pulsana	Annually, on the 14th of Mahavud.
	Parnera Purgunna.	
9	Chichaee	Every Saturday.
10	Fuldhara	Every Sunday.
11	Bhootsur Kusba	Annually, for a month and a half, in April and May.

23. *5th.*—Another source of prosperity to the cultivators is the great natural fertility and productiveness of the soil, intersected, as the country is, with rivers, and dotted with numerous tanks and wells.

5th.—The productiveness of the Soil.

24. The soil is an alluvial deposit, washed down by the rivers which take their rise in the Western Ghauts of Khandeish, and spread fertility in their course. This alluvial soil is generally divided into three kinds :—

The Soil.

1*st*.—The kalee, or black alluvial soil.

2*nd*.—The gorat, a lighter soil, varying from a reddish yellow to a brown colour.

3*rd*.—The baysur, a soil where the kalee and gorat run one into the other, and amalgamate.

25. The black soil is most common in Parnera, Bulsar, and Parchole. A broad belt of it runs along the line of the sea coast; another belt of it runs through Bhootsur, and a part of the Chicklee purgunna, nearest to the foot of the ghauts. This latter belt is a prolongation of the rich black soil of the Bansda valley. Between these two belts of black soil the gorat and baysur are chiefly found.

The Black Soil.

26. The gorat is the richest description of soil, and produces in rapid succession the most luxuriant crops. It is often termed bagaeet or garden land, and very justly so, for, I believe, no artificial soil made for garden purposes could be more adapted to the growth of rich garden produce. The gorat is chiefly situated near the banks of rivers, and thus the soil in the southern parts of the Parchole and Soopa purgunnas is gorat; and also the soil of a few villages in the Chicklee and Bulsar purgunnas, such as Tullas Chora, Mulwarra, Hoond, Ghegtee, Oondach, and Waguldhura, while His Highness the Guicowar's purgunnas of Gundevee, Nowsaree, and Tellaree are almost entirely gorat.

The Gorat Soil.

27. The baysur soil, being an amalgamation of the kalee and gorat, is so mixed up with them, that it is difficult to assign to it any fixed limits : it is found in all the purgunnas, and is considered a good and productive kind of soil.

The Baysur.

28. In the Bhugwarra purgunna the soil is more like that of the Konkun than of Guzerat. It is very rocky, hilly, and covered with trees and jungle. It is less fertile than the other purgunnas, and has the disadvantage of being chiefly populated by the Kalapurruj or wild Bheel tribes, who are very inferior cultivators.

The Soil of Bhugwarra.

29. Of the soils of the six southern purgunnas of this zillah, that of Parchole is the richest and most productive. That purgunna presented, as I saw it early in November last season, as pleasing a prospect as the eye could wish to dwell upon. It was one immense field of luxuriant and varied cultivation. Sugar-cane, ginger, saffron, tobacco, the castor oil plant, cotton, chillies, vegetables, and grains of all kinds, covered the country as far as the eye could reach. The whole of the land of this purgunna is either under cultivation, or enclosed

for pasturage. So little of the latter is left, that the cultivators complain they have not sufficient grass-land for their cattle. The Soopa purgunna is also very fertile, and highly cultivated. In Chicklee and Bulsar there are many fine and prosperous villages, but the cultivation is not so continuous as in Parchole and in Soopa. In Parnera, including Bhootsur, the cultivation is inferior to Bulsar and Chicklee, and in Bhugwarra inferior to Parnera.

30. The country generally is abundantly supplied with tanks and wells. In Parchole and Soopa in particular, there is scarcely a village that does not contain two and three tanks, and from ten to thirty, and even more wells, used for irrigation. The result is the beautiful fields of cultivation these purgunnas yearly produce. It is obvious, where so much cultivation is dependent upon irrigation, that it is the interest of Government and of the cultivator to keep these tanks and wells in repair.

Tanks and Wells.

31. The tanks that the cultivators require for irrigation are not very deep ones, that will retain the water during the whole year; but tanks covering a large surface, and so situated, that the land to be irrigated lies around it, and upon a gentle and gradual slope. In the event of a scanty monsoon, the cultivator has recourse to his tanks in September and October, and by irrigation saves his khurreef crops from any very serious damage. In November and December he again wants to irrigate his land to raise some of his rubbee crops. So that if the tanks contain a supply of water to the end of December, the cultivator is independent, so far as his crops are concerned, sugar-cane excepted, and that crop is usually raised by well irrigation.

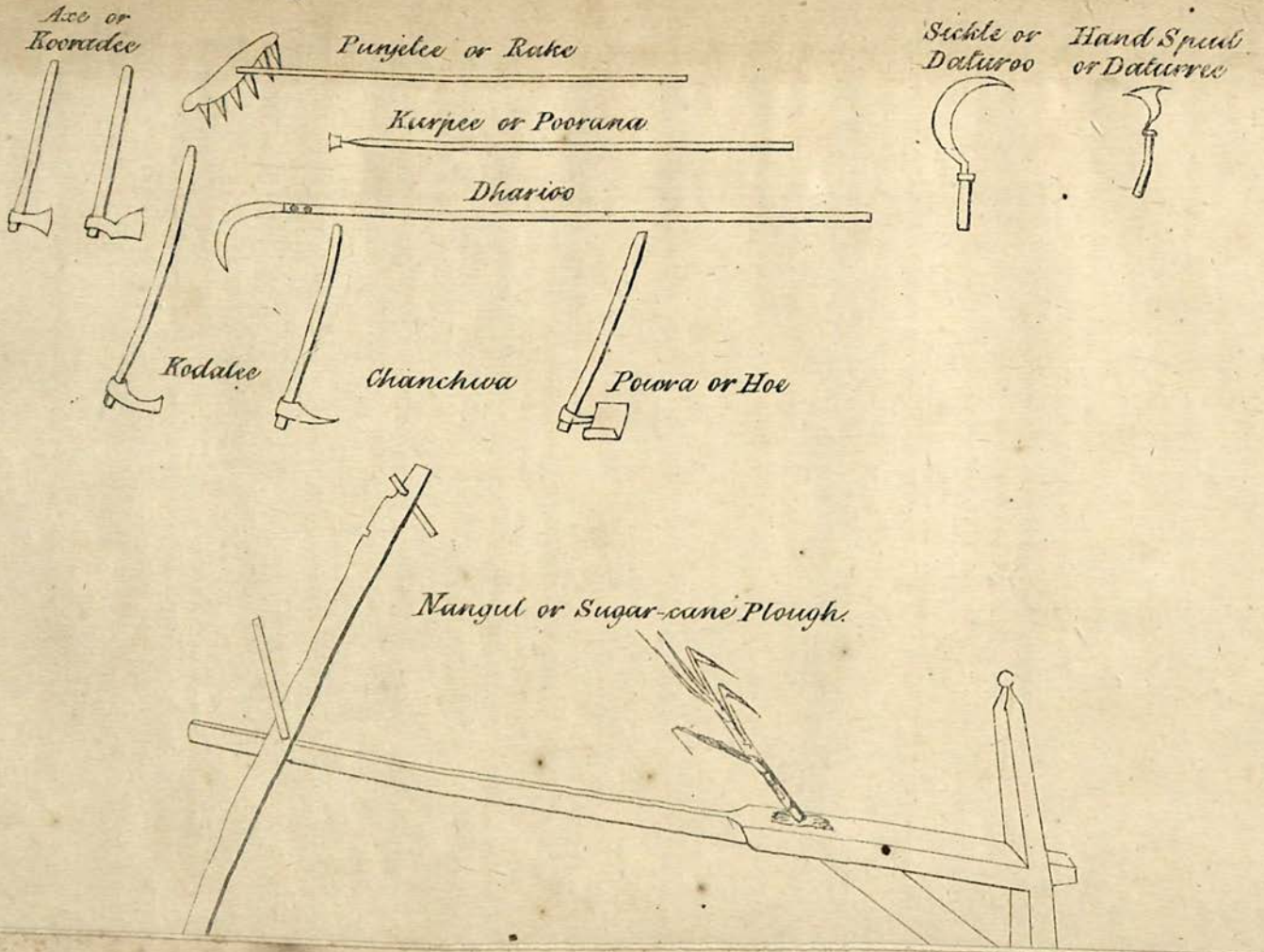
32. Tanks of the above description are easily made, and at a small cost. By taking advantage of the natural undulations of the country, and by observing the direction in which the natural drainage of the country flows, large and fine tanks are made by simply raising an embankment of earth, so as to connect two ridges of elevated land, and thus to form a basin, into which the surplus water flows and accumulates. It is pleasing to observe how largely the Native cultivator of this part of Guzerat has availed himself of these natural advantages, and how well he has always selected the situation of the numerous tanks which fertilize the southern purgunnas of this zillah, leaving but few places where the features of the country afford facilities for making a tank unappropriated. My object has therefore been, not so much to make new tanks or wells, as to keep those already in existence in repair.

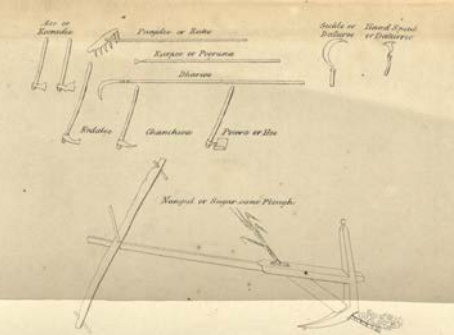
33. The accompanying plate of the agricultural implements used in this zillah (for which I am indebted to Mr. W. M. Kelly, the Surveyor attached to the Collector's Office,) well illustrates the purposes for which these implements are used, and requires but little explanation from me.

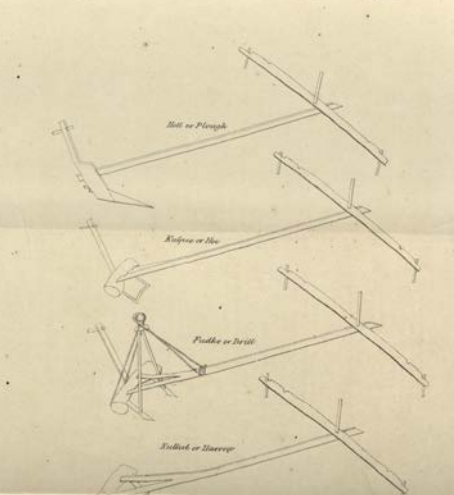
Agricultural Implements.

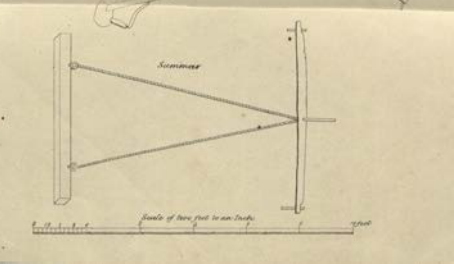
34. The plough is of a more handy and finished make than that commonly used in the Konkan, which is often nothing more than an inverted stick.

The Plough.


Axe or Kooradee
Punjelee or Rake
Kurpee or Poorana
Dharioo
Sickle or Daturoo
Hand Spud or Daturee
Kodalee
Chanchiva
Powra or Hoe
Nangul or Sugar-cane Plough.


Axe or Kumakia
Pangalee or Kuttie
Kuttoe or Peeroona
Dharwa
Kodalee
Chanchuva
Pooroo or Hoe
Sickle or Dattiuru
Hand Sickle or Dattiuruvo
Nangul or Sugar-cane Plough


Mutt or Plough
Kuttoe or Hoe
Puddie or Drill
Kullivil or Harrow


Sammar
Scale of two feet to an Inch.
feet

35. The drill is one of the most ancient, simple, but yet ingenious, implements of agriculture used. As the oxen drag this implement through the field, the husbandman, standing behind, guides it with one hand, and with the other pours the grain into a little cup placed at the top of two hollow bamboos, through which the seed runs and falls immediately behind the drill into a furrow which the drill prepares ready to receive it. It is astonishing with what expertness and efficiency the husbandman uses this implement. I have often seen a field of wheat or joaree sown with it that would rival in straightness and regularity many a Yorkshire farmer's wheat fields. Where the soil is light, sometimes three and four hollow bamboos are used. The patent iron drill now used in England and Scotland, I believe, borrowed the original idea from this implement, and is only an improvement upon it.

The Drill.

36. The kulpee.—The blade of this implement is made a little smaller than the space between the teeth of the drill, and is used to weed the ground between the furrows, after wheat or joaree has sprung up.

The Kulpee.

37. The kullub is used for the same purpose as the kulpee, and also at times to smooth the ground after ploughing.

The Kullub.

38. The summar is a log of wood used as a roller, and the branches of trees are often tied to it, to smooth and rake the ground after sowing.

The Summar.

39. The kurpee or porana.—This the husbandman holds in one hand while ploughing. It has a goad at one end to drive the oxen, and at the other a sort of spud, to clean the plough when it gets clogged with earth.

The Kurpee or Porana.

40. The sugar-cane plough.—This is another very ingenious implement of agriculture. The husbandman sits on the pole of the plough with his back to the upright post, at the foot of which is a large plough shod with iron. A large hollow bamboo connects the angle at the base of the plough with the pole. As the plough is dragged by four or more oxen through the ground, the husbandman, seated on the pole, feeds in rapid succession the hollow bamboo with canes of sugar-cane, with which boys running on each side of the plough supply him. The weight of the husbandman is sufficient to depress the plough into the soil five or six inches, so as to bury the canes in the furrow which the plough prepares to receive them. The hollow bamboo is placed at such an angle that the canes as they pass out of the lower end of it are flatly laid in the furrow, without being broken or injured. The kullub or summar is afterwards used to smooth the ground. By this process the sugar-cane is laid entire in the ground: at each knot it throws forth new plants, which are nourished during their early growth by the saccharine matter contained in the intermediate parts of the cane between the knots.

The Sugar-cane Plough.

41. The ploughing of a field with sugar-cane is always a scene of merriment and animation. The number of person employed,—the rapidity and expertness with which the canes are laid in the ground, at the same time that the ground is being ploughed,—the alacrity with which the boys running along on each side of the plough supply the husbandman with the canes, singing and shouting, and eating sugar-cane as they go along,—all tend to excitement, whilst the prospect of a remunerative return for their labour seems to animate the countenance of every husbandman, and to make his labour easy.

Produce.

42. Sugar-cane is the staple production of the purgunnas of Parchole, Soopa, and Bulsar. In these and the adjoining Guicowar purgunnas of Gundevee, Nowsaree, and Telaree, the cane flourishes better than in any other part of Guzerat. The white Mauritius cane, introduced into the Parchole and Soopa purgunnas in 1834-35 and 1835-36, is much appreciated by the cultivators. There is now scarcely a village in those purgunnas that has not a few beegas sown with it. In Ubrama, Surow, and Ichapoor, where it grows abundantly, I saw some very fine fields of it last year.

43. The cultivators have often a bad practice of sowing the Mauritius and common red cane together: this tends to deteriorate the Mauritius cane—a plant which requires more water and care in cultivation than the common red cane. The cultivators complain that the jackals are very fond of the Mauritius cane, and destroy much of it. Goor, a coarse kind of moist sugar, is manufactured from the canes by the cultivators themselves. This goor is very largely consumed by the inhabitants of all the neighbouring towns, and also forms a large item of export, chiefly from Bulsar and Surat to Bombay, Gogo, and Bhownuggur. It is said to be a very wholesome diet.

44. Owing to the increased cultivation of sugar-cane, the price of goor has lessened from Rs. 1-12-0 and Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 1 and Rs. 0-12-0 per maund. But sugar-cane is still a very valuable and remunerating crop. In the village of Khursar some of the cultivators make a little sugar of very good quality; but the process is expensive, and not generally adopted. In the year 1845, one Doolubhaee Nichabhaee, of Khursar, obtained a reward of Rs. 200 from the Government Prize Committee of the Agri-Horticultural Society for a sample of 400 lbs. of the best sugar. The same individual obtained another reward of Rs. 75 for the best sample of hemp in 1847.

45. The number of beegas under sugar-cane cultivation is—

	In 1848-49.	In 1849-50.	In 1844-45.
	Beegas.	Beegas.	Beegas.
In Soopa*	649	661	479
In Parchole	960	952	457
In Chicklee	952	949	787
In Bulsar	1,442	1,455	1,176
In Parnera	457	503	418
In Bhugwarra	224	269	272

A beega of sugar-cane will produce from 75 to 100 maunds of jagree or goor, according to the productiveness of the soil.

Cotton.

46. This produce is not grown in the southern districts, except in Soopa and Parchole; the land of the other four purgunnas is not suited for the growth of cotton, and it has never therefore been grown in them, except in small patches here and there.

	In 1848-49.	In 1849-50.	In 1834-35.
	Beegas.	Beegas.	Beegas.
In Soopa	3,583	3,126	2,695
In Parchole	2,648	1,987	2,061
In Chicklee	18	2	32
In Bulsar	....	....	....
In Parnera	....	....	....
In Bhugwarra	....	....	....

Rice.

47. This is the staple produce of the purgunnas of Bhugwarra, Parnera, and Chicklee: it is also extensively produced in Bulsar; but in Soopa and Parchole, where superior crops are raised, rice is not so much grown. There are upwards of twenty-four varieties of rice grown in these districts—the best kinds are called Bengallee, soonkvel, illaechee, and salyoo: these are raised of the best quality in the Chicklee purgunna, near to the Ghauts.

	In 1848-49.	In 1849-50.	In 1844-45.
	Beegas.	Beegas.	Beegas.
In Parchole	4,125	4,222	4,016
In Soopa	5,777	5,969	5,662
In Chicklee	18,716	19,585	20,730
In Bulsar	9,520	9,585	9,345
In Bhugwarra	13,477	13,844	12,300
In Parnera	7,780	7,910	7,604

* In these returns the produce of the alienated lands is not included. These alienated lands are very considerable, and are usually the most fertile spots in each village, and produce

48. Wheat, barley, bajree, and gram, are rarely cultivated south of the Taptee, but to the north of that river they are extensively produced, and of good quality.

Wheat.

49. Tobacco is grown in the beds, and along the banks of rivers, though not in sufficient quantities to supply the wants and consumption of the population. It is therefore largely imported into these districts.

Tobacco.

50. Ginger and saffron grow well in the villages of Ichapoor, Salez, Kolwa, Unchelee, Kucholee, Umulsar, and Surhee, in the purgunnas of Parchole and Soopa; and also in some of the Guicowaree villages of the Gundevee purgunna. With ginger and saffron three, and sometimes more, different kinds of crops are to be seen growing together, presenting a striking instance of the extreme fertility of the soil, and of rich luxuriant cultivation. The ginger, with its brilliant crisp foliage, covers the surface of the soil; the saffron is sown in lines crossing each other at right angles every two or three yards, and thus dividing the field into a number of square parterres, adapted for irrigation; the brinjal and chillee plants are interspersed at regular distances; and towering above all is the castor oil plant, with its umbrella shaped top, affording a cool shade, under which the more tender vegetation flourishes. Even the stem of the castor oil plant is not without its use, for up its lofty stalk climbs in clusters a kind of bean, loaded with white flowers and ripe pods.

Ginger and Saffron.

Ginger Cultivation.

	In 1848-49.			In 1849-50.			In 1844-45.		
	Beegas	w.	w.	Beegas	w.	w.	Beegas	w.	w.
In Parchole	77	19	15	41	13	15	40	0	0
In Soopa	65	0	0	39	18	0	60	0	0
In Chicklee		.....			....		8	0	0
In Bulsar		.....		22	11	10	21	0	0
In Parnera		.....		9	7	5	18	0	0
In Bhugwarra		.....		2	11	0	5	0	0

51. The castor oil plant is very extensively grown in Parchole, Soopa, Bulsar, and in some parts of Chicklee. The oil extracted from it is of the greatest purity, and it is sold very cheap in all the bazars of the neighbouring towns for lamp oil, although, from its great purity, it is well adapted for medicinal purposes without any process of refinement. This oil is also largely exported from these districts.

Castor Oil Plant.

52. It is difficult to estimate the number of beegas of land sown with this

a large quantity of sugar-cane. I can obtain no earlier returns of the extent of the sugar-cane cultivation than those of 1844-45. A return for 1835 or 1825 would have better supported my argument of the great increase of its cultivation during the last few years. But the fact is one of admitted notoriety.

plant, as it is never sown alone, but is always interspersed with other crops, such as sugar-cane, toor, ginger, chillies, and garden produce of all kinds. It grows with wonderful rapidity, and soon towers above every other crop. It is sown in June and July, and in the November following attains the great height of from 10 to 15 feet.

53. Joaree.—This and rice are the common food of the inhabitants of the Surat Attaveesee, as well as of the Broach Collectorate. It is very extensively grown north of the Taptee, but is less and less cultivated as you proceed to the southward, until, in the districts of Parnera and Bhugwarra, it is almost entirely superseded by rice, nagli, and kodra. Joaree has become so cheap of late years, as barely to yield a remunerating return.

Joaree.

Joaree Cultivation.

	In 1848-49.	In 1849-50.	In 1844-45.
	Beegas.	Beegas.	Beegas.
In Parchole	9,813	9,296	8,442
In Soopa	6,011	4,979	4,645
In Bulsar	393	188	84
In Chicklee	3,195	3,233	2,154
In Parnera	184	139	49
In Bhugwarra	24	56	...

54. Among the miscellaneous crops may be mentioned—

Miscellaneous Crops.

Toor, extensively produced.

Turmeric.

Carroway seed.

Goowar, for feeding cattle.

Tul, from which sweet oil is made.

Hemp.

Plantains.

Chillies.

Wal, extensively as a second crop.

Wuttanas or peas.

Mustard.

Nagli and Kodra. Extensively to the southward, and along the sea coast. It is grown in inferior soils, and is used as food by the poorer class of people. Its chief quality is that it will keep good for many years, the capsule being so thick and hard that insects cannot eat through it.

55. The following is a table showing the population of the six southern districts during the years 1822 and 1848; the number of square miles in each district; and the relative number of inhabitants to a square mile :—

Population.

	Population in 1822.	Population in 1848.	Number of Square Miles.	Number of Inhabitants to a Square Mile in 1848.	Increase per Cent. of Population in 26 Years.
Soopa	11,802	20,812	63	$330\frac{2}{5}$	76·3
Parchole	17,727	31,936	110	$290\frac{3}{10}$	80·2
Chicklee	33,575	48,156	178	$270\frac{5}{10}$	43·4
Bulsar	28,371	50,503	128	$396\frac{7}{12}$	78·0
Parnera	8,011	11,176	78	$246\frac{6}{8}$	71·7
Bhootsur	3,165				
Bhugwarra	22,956	41,207	166	$248\frac{3}{10}$	79·5

N.B.—In Soopa, Parchole, and Parnera there are no large towns; in Chicklee, there is the town of Chicklee, containing a population of about 2,000 inhabitants; in Bulsar, there is the town of Bulsar, containing a population of about 9,000 inhabitants; and in Bhugwarra the town of Balda Pardee, containing a population of about 3,600 inhabitants.

Chief Towns.

56. The chief towns within these and the adjacent Guicowar's districts are—

1. Bulsar.

57. Bulsar is a town rising in importance as a place of trade, and contains an increasing population of about 9,000 inhabitants. Bulsar owes its increase both in trade and in population chiefly to the passing of Act VI. of 1848. This Act, while it has stimulated trade in every port belonging to the East India Company, by making every port free, has tended to injure the trade of every port belonging to a foreign State, where heavy duties of from 5 to 6 per cent. are levied on all imports and exports. Merchants residing at foreign ports along the coast, to avoid paying these heavy duties, send their merchandize by land to the nearest free port of the East India Company, and there ship their goods. The land carriage of these goods costs the merchants 1 or 2 per cent., according to distance, and by avoiding the foreign duties the merchants save from 3 to 4 per cent. For this reason the trade of the neighbouring towns of Gundevee, Billeemora, and Nowsaree, belonging to His Highness the Guicowar, has been greatly withdrawn, and has centered itself at the free ports of Bulsar and Surat.

Return, showing the Trade of Bulsar before and after the passing of Act VI. of 1848.

	Import.			Export.			Total.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
1832-33	76,597	0	4	1,30,411	14	5	2,07,008	14	9
1845-46	74,869	0	0	3,75,001	0	0	4,49,870	0	0
1846-47	82,085	0	0	3,49,913	0	0	4,31,998	0	0
1847-48	1,11,485	0	0	4,16,972	0	0	5,28,457	0	0
1848-49	1,49,848	0	0	8,07,178	0	0	9,57,026	0	0
1849-50	2,17,363	0	0	8,56,999	0	0	10,74,362	0	0

Detailed Statement of the Trade of Bulsar for the Year 1849-50.

	Import.	Export.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Bullion	22,518	1,275	23,793
Golden Ornaments	2,197	..	2,197
Silver Ornaments	84	..	84
Wheat	13,242	..	13,242
Metals, and Metal Wares of British Manufacture	14,944	..	14,944
Metals, and Metal Wares of Foreign Manufacture	149	..	149
Tin, the produce of British Territory	185	..	185
Wool and Woollen Cloths of British Manufacture	772	..	772
Cotton Wool	3,588	748	4,336
Silk and Cotton Cloths	27,996	..	27,996
Cotton Thread	325	..	325
Alum	365	..	365
Camphor	2	..	2
Cloves	118	..	118
Nutmegs and Mace	376	..	376
Black Pepper	1,892	...	1,892
Tea	67	..	67
Asafœtida	366	...	366
European Liquors	80	..	80
Tobacco and Snuff	65,647	2,143	67,790
Salt	..	378	378
Goor	..	3,75,486	3,75,486
Miscellaneous, including chiefly Teak Timber and Grain of sorts	12,450	4,76,969	4,89,419
Total	1,67,363	8,56,999	10,24,362

58. The chief exports of Bulsar are—by sea, goor or coarse sugar, timber, and grain; and by land, salt to Khandeish. The chief imports are piece goods, tobacco, and wheat.

59. The manufactures of Bulsar are cloths, for wearing apparel and for sails, silks for sarees, and bricks, tiles, and pottery, which are here made very cheap.

2. Balda Pardee.

60. Balda Pardee, a town lately belonging to the Rajah of Mandvie, but now lapsed to the East India Company, containing about 3,600 inhabitants. The trade here is carried on by a number of Marwaree and Hindoo merchants, and is in rice, timber, salt, and grain. Balda Pardee has recently been made the residence of a Mamlutdar. It is to be hoped that the additional security and protection his residence within the town is likely to afford will benefit its trade and condition.

3. Chicklee.

61. At Chicklee there is also a Mamlutdar's Thanna; the town is for the most part the residence of the Desaees of the neighbouring districts, and contains a population of about 2,500. There are a few merchants at Chicklee, but it is not a place of much trade.

62. Of the towns belonging to foreign States, and adjacent to the southern districts, the largest is Damaun, a Portuguese settlement, with a Governor and his staff of officers. The town is admirably situated for a place of trade, and contains a mixed population of about 1,500 inhabitants. The Gunga river, which flows nearly through the centre of the town, is greatly superior to the rivers at Bulsar, Billeemora, Gundevee, or even to the Taptee at Surat, all of which are much obstructed by a bar, and are themselves very shallow, and only navigable at particular times of the tide; whereas the bar at the mouth of the Gunga river is only an obstruction at very low tide; at high tides the river is accessible to vessels of large tonnage; and when the river is once entered there is plenty of deep water close along side the town. Damaun is evidently the natural port of the surrounding districts, and were it a British possession I have no hesitation in saying it could rapidly rise to be a place of importance, and become the emporium of much trade; whereas it has dwindled down to a place of insignificance, and its trade is now very small. The illicit trade in opium and other merchandize, which was formerly largely carried on at Damaun, has of late years much diminished by Kurrachee becoming a British port. Before this event, to avoid the duty on opium, large quantities used to be shipped from Kurrachee to Damaun, and from Damaun direct to China.

4. Damaun.

63. Gundevee is a Guicowaree town, containing about 9,000 inhabitants, chiefly Parsees. Gundevee is noted for its ginger, and for the oil extracted from the castor oil plant: both these articles form items of export. Grain, timber, Mhowra flowers for making liquor, and all kinds of jungle products, for dyes, for medicines, and for other purposes, are brought in abundance to Gundevee from the neighbouring districts, and sold at very cheap prices. Many of the Parsees of the town are employed in the manufacture of cotton and silk cloths.

5. Gundevee.

64. Nowsaree is another Guicowaree town, containing a population of about 15,000 persons, among whom are a great many Parsees. Nowsaree is the residence of the Sirsoobah of His Highness the Guicowar, who is invested with the administration, both judicial and fiscal, of His Highness's share of the Surat Attaveesee. The country around Nowsaree is particularly rich and productive, and the trade of the place is chiefly in agricultural products.

6. Nowsaree.

65. Billeemora is a small town belonging to His Highness the Guicowar, eligibly situated on the Umbeeka river, and is much frequented by small craft on that account.

7. Billeemora.

General Remarks.

66. The following return shows the number of Government Schools in the City of Surat, and in the six southern districts of the zillah :—

Education.

Average Number of Boys who have attended the undermentioned Schools during the last Five Years.

	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.
English School in Surat	133	177	228	274	283
Vernacular do. do. No. 1	151	163	170	146	137
Ditto do. do. „ 2	91	84	85	81	73
Ditto do. do. „ 3	60	57	57	60	58
Ditto do. do. „ 4	..	..	..	50	52
Ditto do. do. „ 5	..	..	..	73	73
Ditto do. do. „ 6	..	..	..	..	47
Hindostanee do. do. „ 7	..	..	..	..	61
Kaliawadee	43	41	38	40	39
Bulsar	34	30	32	50	36

N. B.—The Balda Pardee School was established on the 2nd July 1850; 40 boys entered it on the first day of its being opened.

In the English School at Surat students are qualified in the highest branches of mathematics, and in general English literature. The school is well attended, and is greatly appreciated by all castes. Many of the most respectable inhabitants of Surat send their sons to it for instruction. The general diffusion of knowledge which this school spreads exercises a very beneficial effect on the community.

67. The seven Vernacular schools in Surat afforded during the last year instruction in mathematics, geography, history, and reading and writing, to 716 boys. These schools are under the immediate superintendence of the same English masters (with their Native assistants) who afford a higher standard of education to nearly 300 students in the English school.

68. In the district Vernacular schools, Natives who have qualified as teachers in the Vernacular school at Surat teach the boys arithmetic, history, geography, reading, and writing. These schools are annually visited by the Superintendent of Schools, and public examinations are held at them. There are three such schools in the six southern districts of Surat: one at the Thannah of Kaliawadee, close to the populous Guicowaree town of Nowsaree; another at the town of Bulsar; and a third at Balda Pardee, opened as recently as the 2nd of July 1850, on which day 40 boys entered it. In the other districts of Surat there are similar schools at the principal towns.

69. In Surat the Reverend R. Montgomery, of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, has a small school, and the Chaplain of Surat has another. In these schools portions of the Holy Scriptures are taught. The Hindoos and Mussulmans therefore object to send their sons to them for instruction, and the attendance in consequence is small. Besides these sources of education, there are no other public means of instruction in the Surat zillah. There are, however, a few private schools in some of the towns and villages, at which writing and accounts are taught.

70. In the six southern districts there are no made roads. The consequence is, that from June to September carriage traffic is entirely suspended; and those persons who are obliged to travel during these monsoon months are necessitated to ride on horseback, or on bullocks and buffaloes. In October carts come again into use, and as they travel from village to village, they interlace the whole country with a net-work of cart-ruts. Some of these cart-ruts are much frequented, and where the soil is soft, they are often 2 feet in depth, very uneven, and full of holes, offering great obstruction to easy communication from place to place.

Roads.

71. Much has been said of the difficulty of making roads in Guzerat, from the soil being in parts so light and friable that with the slightest traffic it becomes pulverized; and in other parts, from the plains being so sandy. Stone is very scarce, and in many places not procurable. These remarks, though they apply with great truth to the country north of the Taptee, are not so applicable to the southern districts of the Surat zillah, because from Gundevee southward stone is everywhere abundant, lying on the surface of the soil.

72. If along the principal lines of traffic the roadway was drained at the sides, and the material dug up was thrown into the centre, so as to raise it with a good slope, to prevent the water remaining upon it during the monsoon, and if small nullas and ravines were bridged over, such roads would, as stated in your letter No. 197, dated the 24th of April 1850, to the Superintending Engineer Northern Provinces, be a vast improvement on the cart-ruts as they at present exist.

73. The principal lines of road enumerated by you to be thus constructed were—

1*st.*—From Surat to Kim Chowkee, on the high road to Broach.

2*nd.*—From Surat to the Koondaeebaree Ghaut, in the Khandeish Collectorate.

3*rd.*—From Surat to Damaum.

To these I would add a road from Bulsar through Bhootsur and Dhurrumpoor towards Mooleeree in Khandeish.* Another great object to be attended to in making such roads is to make them straight, and in the most direct line from place to place. The country is level, and there are no hills or other obstructions to avoid. At present the cart-ruts often take most circuitous routes, owing to the Patel, or Desaee, or some person of influence, who may have a plot of cultivation in the direct line of route, obliging the traveller to go round it. This so often occurs that the distance between two places as the crow flies is frequently one-third less than the distance by the cart-rut.

74. A revenue survey for the re-assessment of the whole of the lands of the Surat zillah is urgently required. The last survey of the zillah was conducted by Lieutenant Newport, one of the

Revenue Survey.

* Vide my letter No. 17, dated 24th August 1849.

Assistants under Captain Monier Williams, in 1816. This survey is quite out of date, and though it has been patched up at times to meet altered circumstances, yet even as it at present exists it is very faulty. I know of nothing that would be received as a greater boon by the cultivators than an equitable and discriminating rate of assessment, such as has been introduced in the Deccan ; nor do I know of any measure that would tend so much to improve their condition, and at the same time advance the interests of Government.

75. In conclusion, I have to apologize for this Report being long overdue ; but it was my desire to collect sufficient data, and the want of local experience prevented me from submitting this Report with my Revenue Report last year.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) A. F. BELLASIS,
First Assistant Collector.

Surat, First Assistant Collector's Office, 15th October 1850.

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